

**THIS DECISION HAS BEEN APPEALED. THE  
FOLLOWING IS THE RELATED SOAH DECISION NUMBER:**

**SOAH DOCKET NO. 453-03-1754.M2**

December 13, 2002

Re: Medical Dispute Resolution  
MDR #: M2-02-1092-01

IRO Certificate No.: IRO 5055

Dear:

In accordance with the requirement for TWCC to randomly assign cases to IROs, TWCC assigned your case to \_\_\_\_ for an independent review. \_\_\_\_ has performed an independent review of the medical records to determine medical necessity. In performing this review, \_\_\_\_ reviewed relevant medical records, any documents provided by the parties referenced above, and any documentation and written information submitted in support of the dispute.

The independent review was performed by a matched peer with the treating health care provider. Your case was reviewed by a physician who is Board Certified in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.

I am \_\_\_\_ and I certify that the reviewing physician in this case has certified to our organization that there are no known conflicts of interest that exist between him and any of the treating physicians or other health care providers or any of the physicians or other health care providers who reviewed this case for determination prior to referral to the Independent Review Organization.

We are simultaneously forwarding copies of this report to the payor and the Texas Workers' Compensation Commission. This decision by \_\_\_\_ is deemed to be a Commission decision and order.

Clinical History:

This 44-year-old female claimant injured her back on \_\_\_\_\_. She has been through extensive treatment, which eventually led to a fusion at L4-5 and L5-S1. She continues to have back pain and some tingling into both lower extremities.

Disputed Services:

Facet joint injection.

Decision:

The reviewer agrees with the determination of the insurance carrier. The reviewer is of the opinion that the procedure in question is not medically necessary in this case.

Rationale for Decision:

There is insufficient information to identify the facet joints as contributing to the patient's painful syndrome. There is no clear clinical information that would identify the need for facet injections. A patient who has had two-level fusions can expect, in many situations, to have chronic pain that may never resolve. No good literature exists to indicate that facet injections alleviate this pain on a consistent basis.

### **YOUR RIGHT TO REQUEST A HEARING**

Either party to this medical dispute may disagree with all or part of this decision and has a right to request a hearing.

**If disputing a spinal surgery prospective decision** a request for a hearing must be in writing and it must be received by the TWCC Chief Clerk of Proceedings within ten (10) days of your receipt of this decision (28 Tex. Admin. Code 142.5©).

**If disputing other prospective medical necessity (preauthorization) decisions** a request for a hearing must be in writing and it must be received by the TWCC Chief Clerk of Proceedings within twenty (20) days of your receipt of this decision (28 Tex. Admin. Code 148.3).

This Decision is deemed received by you **five (5) days** after it was mailed (28 Tex. Admin. Code 102.4(h) or 102.5 (d)). A request for a hearing should be sent to:

Chief Clerk of Proceedings  
Texas Workers' Compensation Commission  
P.O. Box 40669  
Austin, TX 78704-0012

**A copy of this decision should be attached to the request.** The party appealing the decision shall deliver a copy of its written request for a hearing to all other parties involved in the dispute.

**I hereby verify that a copy of this Independent Review Organization (IRO) Decision was sent to the carrier, the requestor and claimant via facsimile or U.S. Postal Service from the office of the IRO on December 13, 2002.**

Sincerely,